

Probabilities of the Prophecies

Pastor Joseph Clark – July 24, 2020

“I am not the King. Jesus Christ is the King. I’m just an entertainer.”

— Elvis Presley

Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

- John 20:29 ESV

Can you envision how big the number 100,000,000,000,000,000.²¹ is? It is 100 quadrillion to the 21st power.

The odds of winning the average pick 6 number lottery are 1 in 14 million. The odds of getting struck by lightning are 1 in 700,000.

Theologians state that Jesus fulfilled over 400 Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah.

A math professor named Peter Stoner (June 16, 1888 – March 21, 1980) who was the Chairman of the Departments of Mathematics and Astronomy for Pasadena City College until 1953; Chairman of the science division, Westmont College, from 1953 to 1957; Professor Emeritus of Science, Westmont College; and Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Astronomy, Pasadena City college, worked with 600 students to determine the probability of someone fulfilling just eight of the Messianic prophecies. The result was that the odds for someone to fulfil just eight of the prophecies was 1 in 1 quadrillion. And yet Jesus fulfilled all of them. Hebrews, Muslims, and Christians all acknowledge that he lived. Secular authors, historians, and philosophers, Julius Thallus, Tacitus, Mara Bar-Serapion, Phlegon, Pliny the Younger, Suetonius, Lucian of Samosata:, Celsus, Josephus all lived within the era of Christ and accounted for his life and ministry. The Jewish Talmud and the Jewish

Toledot Yeshu, both criticize Jesus, documenting in detail his life and ministry and refer to his miracles as “magic”.

Historian’s have determined that Homer’s Iliad is one of the most reliable ancient texts for accuracy as they have located 600 original manuscripts. They also contend that the Bible is the first most reliable ancient text with over 6000, original manuscripts located and preserved. When the manuscripts are examined against later copies of the Bible, the translations and copies were found to be 99.5% accurately consistent. Archaeology has never disproved a single aspect of the Bible.

As I have stated in previous articles, we do not get to cobble together our faith. Create our faith based on what pleases us, what does not challenge us, what does not make us uncomfortable. We did not create God, God created us. Therefore, the word, the Bible is our authoritative standard. God is the authority; the Bible is the authoritative standard.

We choose to believe, not because it is believable (if it were easy to believe it would not be miraculous), and not because it is easy. We choose to believe the easy stuff to believe, and we choose to believe the stuff that is hard to believe, and we choose to believe that which is challenging to believe. We believe it because it is the truth.

God does not ask us to choose to have faith once we are convinced that everything is believable.

I have heard many say: I am still trying to come to peace with what is in the Bible. I will believe it when I see it. No. you will see it when you believe it.

The word of God was authored by the Holy spirit and written by human hands guided by the Holy Spirit. It is written exactly the way that God intended it to be read. It is written exactly the way God intended it to be interpreted, and it is most importantly, written exactly the way that God intends for us to walk it out and live it.

Are there parts of the Bible that are difficult to believe? Of course, there is. We choose to believe out of faith. We do not dare, under-believe. We need to face God someday and say ‘Lord, I bought into everything out of faith and trust, obedience, and commitment. No matter how much it challenged my puny,

scientific, human mind, I chose to believe. I chose to believe because I love you and trust you, and no matter what tests my faith, I buy into you and your word unconditionally.’ We do not dare face God and say, ‘I wanted to believe. But you know, some of the stuff is a little cinematic, I mean walking on water, changing water into wine, parting the red sea, ascending into the sky. Seriously, I want to believe in you but that’s a bit much for me to swallow’. No! We must face God and say, ‘I choose to believe as I have the faith of a child’.

There is a massive movement out there in the World today called the “Flat Earth Society”. People who are intrigued by the prospect that the Earth is flat. Despite science providing photographic evidence that the Earth is round, they refuse to believe. If you ask me if I believe the Earth is flat, I will tell you no. No matter how hard I would try, I would not be able to believe that. But when we choose to believe and receive Christ as our Lord and Savior, it all becomes very believable.

But Jesus does not ask us to believe in him because he is believable. In human terms it is inconceivable. He manipulated the laws of physics, matter, time, space, and mathematical probabilities. He does not ask us to believe because we have proof. He advises us to believe out of faith. If we believe out of faith and we choose to receive him in our hearts in accordance with the Gospels as our Lord and Savior, we are saved.

So, what does God say to us about belief?

John 14:12-14 ESV

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

John 3:16 ESV

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 14:1 ESV

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

Romans 10:9-10 ESV

Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Mark 9:23 ESV

And Jesus said to him, “If you can’t! All things are possible for one who believes.”

Hebrews 11:1 ESV

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:6 ESV

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

James 2:19 ESV

You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!

So, the question we need to ask ourselves?

Do I truly believe? Have I chosen in my heart to receive Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior?

Do I believe on Sunday? Do I believe each weekday? Do I believe in the evening as strongly as in the morning? Do I believe when I am standing in the face of temptation as much as I believe when I am at Bible Study? Do I believe when someone cuts me off in traffic or is rude to me at the drive thru as when I am singing hymns? Do I choose out of faith to believe as strongly when I am discouraged as when I am feeling centred?

Do I ask myself when I am doing something questionable, lustful, or angry, do you approve of what I am about to do Lord Jesus Christ? Or, is the accuser, the enemy, the tempter, the devil, applauding what I am about to do? What a horrifying thought! We CHOOSE to believe and unconditionally buy into the everything in

the Word, out of faith. And when moments arise that our faith is challenged. That faith is reinforced by Love and devotion.

To quote the late Ravi Zacharias:

“Only through repentance and faith in Christ can anyone be saved. No religious activity will be sufficient, only true faith in Jesus Christ alone.”

- Ravi Zacharias

Praise to our Lord and Savior, God the son, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the World, the way, the truth, and the life, in no one else can salvation be found, Jesus the Christ. All glory and honor are His forever and ever.

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